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previous impressions, the papers were generally found in order and with very few *lacunae*. This is remarkable in view of the vicissitudes experienced by the papers in removal from Louisiana and Florida to Cuba and from that island to Seville, and the comparative neglect that awaited them in the latter place, until within the last decade. Fortunately better storage facilities are now available in the Casa Lonja, and historical students may rest assured that this really priceless collection for the study of our early relations with Spain is reasonably safe from all destructive agencies except those of the recent Hunnish variety. Mr. Hill gives a complete list of the manuscript indexes and inventories that exist in the collection and also an extensive list of abbreviations he has employed. Mr. David M. Matteson has prepared a very full index of a hundred pages, comprising a sixth part of the entire volume. His citations are to legajos and this plan will prove helpful to those who wish to check the references made by future writers.

One can only determine the definite value of the work by using it. The reviewer can say, after personally testing portions of Mr. Hill's preliminary notes in Seville and also the slips deposited in Washington, that both are exceedingly helpful. It is possible for an investigator to determine from the printed *Descriptive Catalogue* what legajos would be of service to him. In cases where these legajos are fully listed, he could, by corresponding with the Director of the Department of Historical Research, or by a personal visit, select such documents as he wished to have copied. He might also, through Mr. Hill's notes, locate the legajo numbers of the documents listed by Robertson, although this would be a more uncertain process. The copying of documents, in normal times at least, would thus largely be a matter of detail, arranged expeditiously and at the minimum expense. Mr. Hill is to be commended for his painstaking labor in bringing about this result. It is to be hoped that the Carnegie Institution, having thus inaugurated its series of more complete descriptive volumes, may shortly be in a position to continue this valuable work in other Spanish repositories.

ISAAC JOSLIN COX.

Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives. By FRANK A. GOLDER, Professor of History in the State College of Washington. (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington. 1917. Pp. 177.)

To the valuable series of *Guides* to material for American history in foreign archives, published under the auspices of the Department of Historical Research in the Carnegie Institution of Washington, a welcome addition has been made by Professor Frank A. Golder on the material in the Russian archives.

The Russian archives have been almost completely neglected by stu-

dents of American history because of their remoteness, the difficulties of language, and the restricted range of topics in which they can be profitably exploited. Professor Golder in his *Guide* proves that they furnish material for practically only two lines of research in connection with American history, namely, diplomatic history and the history of Russian exploration and colonization in Northwest America. Formal diplomatic relations with the United States did not begin until 1808, and Professor Golder was not permitted access to diplomatic material of a date later than 1853. This is much to be regretted for from the making of the treaty of 1824 until the beginning of the Civil War the diplomatic relations between the United States and Russia are of comparatively little significance, while for the interesting and important questions of Russia's attitude toward that conflict, the sending of the Russian fleet to America, and the negotiations which led to the sale of Alaska the door is tantalizingly shut in the face of the investigator.[1] Nevertheless the *Guide* brings some compensation in showing that a study of Russia's relations with Spain at the time of the South American struggle for independence may throw some new light on that episode. It is interesting to note that almost all the diplomatic material is in French. The archives furnish on the other hand a most varied, voluminous, and practically unworked mass of material, almost wholly in Russian, dealing with Russian exploration in the Pacific, especially that of Bering, Russian colonization in America, and the Russian American Company. This material covers a wide range of time, from the middle of the eighteenth century down to 1871. A thorough study of the Russian settlements in Alaska may yield an important contribution to the history of European colonization in America. It is unfortunate, however, that the records of the Russian American Company "have disappeared without leaving a trail behind them", although the author of the *Guide* "made special efforts" to locate them.

Professor Golder in his *Guide to Materials for American History in Russian Archives* has done his work thoroughly and conscientiously. Fortunately provided with the necessary linguistical equipment and but little hindered by red tape, he was able patiently to overcome the difficulties of the ill-arranged and imperfectly catalogued condition of the archives and produce a work for which the future American investigator will be extremely grateful. Almost all of the material is in Petrograd, although there are a few items in Moscow. In listing the material the author places it under the head of the department or bureau in which it is found, giving first a short history of the archives in that department. His description of the materials is brief yet ample enough for an investigator to determine whether any particular document has any bearing on the subject in which he is interested. In the case of the more significant documents a condensed statement of contents is given.

[1] Mr. Golder's permission was subsequently extended to 1870, and he is now examining the diplomatic archives for the period from 1854 to that date. ED.

The book is supplied with a full index which adds to its value and usefulness.

JOHN C. HILDT.

The Middle Group of American Historians. By JOHN SPENCER BASSETT, Ph.D., LL.D. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1917. Pp. xii, 324.)

THE writing of American history chiefly by New Englanders has been regarded in the South as an unhappy circumstance. This volume by Professor Bassett, a scholar of North Carolina origin and education, tends to set the balance even through the appraisal of New England historians by a Southern student of history. His "Middle Group" of writers and collectors of historical material is made up of Sparks, Bancroft, Prescott, and Motley, all New Englanders, and Peter Force, representing the Middle States. In his prefatory chapter on the Early Progress of History in the United States, he introduces—besides Bradford, Winthrop, Hutchinson, and Jeremy Belknap—a number of the colonial figures from all the regions of early settlement. The final chapter, on the Historians and their Publishers, is a brief account of the business arrangements under which many of the books touched upon in the earlier chapters were produced.

So much for the topics with which Professor Bassett has undertaken to deal. His method of handling them is both descriptive, or biographical, and critical. His chapters on Sparks and Bancroft make the largest contribution of fresh material, for many unpublished passages are drawn from the Sparks Manuscripts in the Harvard College Library, and still more from the Bancroft Manuscripts in the keeping of the Massachusetts Historical Society. It is twenty-four years since Herbert B. Adams published his *Life and Writings of Jared Sparks.* The first professor of history in an American college is already a somewhat mythical figure to scholars of the present generation. His name to-day owes something of its perpetuation to its having become a sort of synonym for the ruthless editor of manuscript records in pursuance of his own ideas of diction. Professor Bassett brings forward enough concrete instances of Sparks's method of dealing with the letters of Washington to remind a forgetful generation how far we have travelled on the road of trustworthiness. The same tendency, at an earlier point in his career, is illustrated by passages of correspondence between Bancroft and Sparks, when the latter was editor of the *North American Review* and handled his contributor's articles with a freedom which would have driven a less sensitive writer than Bancroft to fury. The contrast between past and present appears no less clearly in Professor Bassett's picture of the vast untilled field in which Sparks found himself a laborer, and of the manner in which he went about his task of assembling and dealing with his material. The chapter is both informing and discriminating.